

What is claimed is:

1. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program comprising, in combination,

receiving from a media provider a metadata playlist comprising a list of segment descriptors, each of which specifies at least the starting location within said recorded video program of, and a text description of, one of said segments,

displaying a composite image on a display screen consisting of:

a video image area displaying one of said segments of said recorded video program, and

a segment guide area displaying said text description of each of a plurality of said segments,

accepting the identification of the text description of a given one of said plurality of segments from a viewer operated control device, and

displaying said given one of said plurality of segments in said video image area.

2. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 1 wherein said video image area occupies only a portion of said display screen and said segment guide area occupies an area of said display screen outside said video image area.

3. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 1 wherein said segment guide area overlaps said video image area.

4. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 1 wherein said video image area occupies only a portion of said display screen, wherein said segment guide area occupies an area of said display screen outside said video image area, and wherein said method further comprises the step of displaying additional information in an information area which occupies an area of said display screen outside both said video image area and said segment guide area.

5. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 4 wherein said additional information consists of one or more advertisements.

6. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 4 wherein said additional information is derived from the segment descriptor for that one of said segments currently displayed in said video image area.

7. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 6 wherein said additional information contains a supplemental text description related to that one of said segments currently displayed in said video image area.

8. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 6 wherein said method further comprises the step of retrieving said additional information from via the Internet in a manner specified by one of said segment descriptors.

9. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 1 wherein said video image area occupies only a portion of said display screen, wherein said segment guide area occupies an area of said display screen outside said video image area, and wherein said method further comprises the step of displaying a plurality of icons in a toolbar area outside both said video image area and said segment guide area.

10. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 9 further comprising the steps of accepting a selection of a given one of said icons from said viewer operated control device and displaying a list of available playlists in response to the selection of said given one of said icons.

11. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 9 further comprising the steps of accepting a selection of a given one of said icons from said viewer operated control device and for saving an identification of that one of said

segments currently displayed in said video image area in response to the selection of said given one of said icons.

12. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 11 wherein said identification is a bookmark specifying the location within said recorded video program of the beginning of said one of said segments.

13. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 11 wherein said identification specifies at least the location within said recorded video program of the beginning and ending of said one of said segments to enable the later selection and reproduction of said one of said segments.

14. A method for selecting and playing individual segments of a recorded video program as set forth in claim 9 further comprising the steps of accepting a selection of a given one of said icons from said viewer operated control device and for displaying a submenu of selectable functions related to said given one of said icons.